

## DIARY OF AN OLD CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

April 1864.

April 1. We were hard at work building breastworks. Rain at night.

April 2. I came back to camp before breakfast. Snow and rain. Very cold.

April 3. I moved in camp. Cloudy and cold.

April 4. Moved camp to Putnam's church. Rain in the evening.

April 5. We were lying in the church. Rain all day.

April 6 and 7. We were building artillery stands. Cleared off but cold.

April 8. I was building a chimney. Pleasant.

April 9. I was in camp. Rain all day.

April 10. I was at the regiment dinner of the twenty-seventh regiment. Clear in the morning.

April 11, 12, 13 and 14. I was at work building rifle pits. Clear and pleasant.

April 15. I was working the road. Cloudy.

April 16. I was in camp. Rain the most of the day.

April 17. I was in camp. Saw James Craig. Cold.

April 18, 19, 20 and 21. I was working the road. Cold.

April 22, 23, and 24. I was in camp. Pleasant.

April 25, 26 and 27. I was in camp. Very warm.

April 28. I went to work. Pleasant.

April 29. I was digging brush to cover breastworks. Warm.

April 30. We were digging pits for the sharpshooters. Cloudy, rain at night.

May 1864.

May 1. I was in camp. Very warm.

May 2. I was building breastworks. Very warm.

May 3. We left camp in the evening and marched east. Very warm.

May 4. We were cleaning our breastworks. Very warm.

May 5. We were lying close to the line of battle all day. Building breastworks at night. This was the first big battle of the year. The battle was west of Chancellorsville, on the rock road leading to Fredericksburg. As Major Nelson's battery had always been placed where they could do nothing, it was placed on the rock road on a rise to front wide and five or six hundred yards long. The Grays were moving down grade and the Blues had to advance up hill. Major Nelson's gunners had a good chance to show what they had done in front of them. The Blues were lying thick in the little field, as he had given them grape and canister a plenty. On each side was brush. The Blues tried to get around the field so that they could not see them when they knew what was in front of them; at close range the Grays were giving them a volley that was mowing them down in the brush. In this place one could see a man twenty feet in some places. We lost some men but the Blues lost more than ten to our one. The day was warm and long to be remembered.

May 6. We were building breastworks all night. Warm.

May 7. We were having the blues. Our corps of one hundred men was allowed to go one hundred yards in front of our line. Fighting in such a way. The sounds reported that they had lost an average of fifty-five men to the sound. So one can have some idea how many we covered up. I know that we did not cover up one-half that were killed.

Note. Now I will tell you small

boys of one little boy that was a courier for Johnson. He was small, perhaps fourteen years of age, and brave. At dark he made his way to the old Chancellorsville Hotel to the Blues' hospital, and, as he was not dismounted as being a spy, he watched around all night and got the information he could by listening to the doctors and the officers that were there. There were two universals at the door, and, as the wounded were dying all the time, if they had a watch or money it was taken and wrapped up and marked to be sent back to their friends. This boy snatched his chances, got the haversack and got back safely in the morning with the contents and some news of the next move of the Blues.

May 8. We marched to Spotsylvania Court House. The Blues had left the night of the 7th. They let the fire get out and a number of them died were roasted. Some of their wounded had not been gathered turned to death in the brush. The day was hot.

May 9. We were building breastworks day and night. Louisvire had had a fresh with the Blues before we met them and drove them back with a heavy loss to the Blues. A farmer told me that in one ditch in a field that had been plowed as many as three hundred were placed and covered up in little them. The line of breastworks was not straight, so I laid out to try and get the best ground. The west end ran south of east for some distance then nearly goes east to what we know as the elbow, where twenty-one pieces of artillery were placed, then turned south of east for some distance across the draw. We built one breastwork out of logs, and did it in our, so we knew the distance over 100 we had the works about enough. Then we layed poles about three inches in diameter across them, cut logs as large as twenty men could carry and laid them on top of the poles so the boys could walk over them through the cracks. They began to answer us at a protection to their heads. When this was all done, if we had time, we would then build what we called a breastwork between the different companies. These were breastworks running obliquely back from our breastworks in front, so that in case the line was broken, we had some protection on our flank. As Longstreet had driven the line from the right, our division gathered up the men behind them and got them by the breastworks ready to use. So the front line had a thousand yards across fifteen minutes for each man. As soon as the gunners had fired, the men stood flat until the gun was fired again. But

May 10. While we were at work shells fell. So the corps had to seek a place to the rear, get in a ditch and wait to shoot. When the fighting stopped and I was awakened I was above covered up with the brush that the shells had cut off over me. As soon as the shelling stopped we went back to work clean and hot.

May 11. We were building breastworks day and night.

May 12. The corps was at work all night. We worked two and two in hospitals. If one got wounded his mate could take him to the rear. My mate was a North Carolinian, weighing more than two hundred pounds. Between four and five o'clock he was stuck in the hip, the last ranging destroyer. I started off to find a doctor to the field hospital for Texas brigade when I found a general Lee riding on his horse. He told me to go to the charge. He then stopped and I told him that I had no horses. He said "Get your horse." I then went into a tent and found General Lee, of the magazine wounded. He told me that most of the division was captured with a few miles. Dave Willis, of my company, was brought to the hospital with the tip of his hip bone gone. One member of the brigade, his name is Lee, was captured and no sooner was he dressed, he started to the rear on foot, saying "I could rather die on the road than be taken prisoner." I heard from him the next day and learned that he walked fifteen miles that day. Now to my opinion, as certain was assured of that Lee's party were killed. John T. Hough and Dick Hall. Both were shot in the head. Three of my company are not alive and two that were wounded. Between us, my company and company E, on against the breastworks, was a black oak, eighteen inches in diameter, that was cut off by pistol shots. There was no other tree this morning as the recent few pieces of ours came back to the road to feed their horses. By so doing that left a gap open.

Note.—Whether true or not, it seems to me that this is a negro creased through the pocket line and ran in front of the gap was open and the artillery was firing their horses by tree. Some men were permitted to go to the line and bear our dead and when they returned they said that in front of our works all along the line where the Blues were the thickest the road lay from three to five feet deep.

Note.—A negro who was captured

and was sent to the hospital

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